



Weekly Drought Brief Tuesday February 18, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Recent Precipitation: Very little precipitation fell in California over the last week. Precipitation totals (in inches) from Monday, February 10 through Monday, February 17:

- Folsom Dam: 0.28"
- Fresno: 0.04"
- Hetch Hetchy Reservoir: 0.79"
- Los Angeles: 0.00"
- Modesto: 0.07"
- Oroville: 1.12"
- Pollack Pines: 1.20"
- Redding: 0.68"
- Sacramento: 0.03"
- Shasta Dam: 1.84"
- Willits: 1.32"

While Northern California received its largest rainstorm in 14 months over the previous weekend, the storm had minimal effect on California's drought conditions and reservoirs' water levels remained largely unchanged.

Near-term Outlook for Precipitation: Dry weather is expected across most of California this week, with a high-pressure front building towards the end of the week that will bring above normal daytime temperatures. A weak storm is possible later in the week in parts of Northern California, although it is not expected to produce significant precipitation.

** Heavy rain and snow would have to fall throughout California very frequently from now until May to reach average annual rain and snowfall. Even with such precipitation, California would remain in drought conditions, due to low supplies from the two previous dry years.**

Snow survey: The most recent [snowpack survey](#), conducted on January 30, shows California snow pack at 12% of normal. The next snowpack survey is scheduled for February 27.

Snow water content: The [Current update](#) shows 26% of normal as of February 17.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of February 16 are very low, including: Don Pedro 52%; Exchequer 21%; Folsom Lake 29%; Lake Oroville 39%; Millerton Lake 35%; New Melones 44%; Pine Flat 18%; San Luis 32%; Shasta 37%; and Trinity Lake 48%.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The California Department of Public Health has identified several communities with potential drinking water shortages in the coming months. The Department is providing technical and funding assistance to these communities to ensure continued drinking water availability, and continues to monitor across the state to determine where it can provide support. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website.

Fire Danger: 545 fires have been reported across the state since January 1, burning 1,142 acres. CALFIRE reports that his current fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 147 fires, burning 478 acres and higher than the year-to-date figure in 2013 (127 fires burning 454 acres). 31 new fires were reported over the past week.

Hydropower Generation: Utilities generating less power from hydroelectric dams due to the drought will have to purchase power from the open market, which will likely come from gas-fired power plants. Recent rain will not significantly improve hydropower generation, though snowpack increases from the recent storm could translate to higher hydropower generation later in the year.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST WEEK

Federal Government

- **Major federal funding announced:** The White House on Friday [announced emergency funding](#) from several federal programs to support drought response. This announcement was coordinated with President Obama's visit to Fresno County. Emergency assistance includes:
 - \$100 million in expedited livestock disaster assistance to California farmers and ranchers. This funding, contained in the 2014 Farm Bill, will be made available through the USDA in 60 days. Funding assistance can cover financial losses by California producers in 2012, 2013 and 2014.
 - \$60 million for California food banks to help families affected by the drought. Funding will be provided by the USDA's Emergency Food Assistance Program.
 - \$5 million of funding for conservation projects at California farms and ranches, provided by USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
 - \$5 million for emergency watershed improvements to enable activities such as stabilizing stream banks and replanting bare lands. Funds will come through the USDA's Emergency Watershed Protection Programs.
 - \$3 million for emergency grants to rural communities facing drinking water shortages. Funds come through USDA's Emergency Community Water Assistance program.
- **Summer food programs:** The USDA committed to expanding the number of Summer Food Service Program meal sites to 600 locations in drought stricken areas throughout the state.
- **Reduced water usage in federal buildings:** Federal agencies were directed by the President to immediately reduce water use at federal facilities in California, including a moratorium on new non-essential landscaping projects.
- **Climate Resilience Fund:** The Obama Administration also [announced that it will include a \\$1 billion Climate Resilience Fund](#) in its proposed 2015 budget to be announced in full next month.
- **White House officials visit Sacramento:** Nancy Sutley, Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, and David Agnew, Director of White House Intergovernmental Affairs visited Sacramento on Wednesday to receive brief with federal agencies on drought response and to convene a coordination meeting between state and federal officials regarding water management during the drought. These meetings were held at the [Joint Operations Center](#) of the California Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

State Government

- **Water Exchanges Expedited:** The California Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation [submitted a joint petition](#) to the State Water Resources Control Board for approval to exchange water within the areas served by the State Water Project and the federal Central Valley project. If granted, this action will enable each system to direct water to users in the other water system's jurisdiction. This action

was called for in the Governor's Proclamation of Emergency Drought and if approved, will last for one year.

- **State supports for Willits' water system:** The California Department of Public Health [approved \\$250,000 in emergency funding](#) for the city of Willits to install an emergency water pipe to maintain drinking water supplies to local residents. Two other state agencies, CALFIRE and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, have contributed personnel to help with this emergency project.
- **More state firefighters:** In addition to maintaining a base level of staffing across the state during the winter, CALFIRE is now [ramping up staffing](#) in several locations much earlier in the season than normal across the Central Valley and Central Sierra Nevada Region to respond to hire wildfire danger caused by dry conditions.
- **Caltrans' signs encourage conservation:** Caltrans [has activated more than 700 electronic signs](#) along California highways with the message: "Serious Drought: Help Save Water." These signs support the "[Save Our Water](#)" campaign and raise awareness of the drought across California.
- **Information forums for agricultural communities:** The California Department of Food and Agriculture announced a [series of forums](#) located across the state's agricultural regions that provides information on emergency support for farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers. These forums begin this week on Tuesday, February 18 and run through February 26.
- **ACWA Conference:** Leaders of the Governor's Drought Task Force [provided a briefing on the state's drought response](#) to a large convening of water agencies in Sacramento on Friday. Resources Secretary John Laird, Emergency Services Director Mark Ghilarducci and State Water Board Chair Felicia Marcus detailed current state actions to this large convening organized by the Association of California Water Agencies.
- **Climate Taskforce:** Governor Brown [co-hosted the President's Taskforce on Climate Preparedness and Resilience](#) in Los Angeles on Thursday with Mayor Eric Garcetti. This Taskforce is developing recommendations to the President regarding how the federal government can support state and local efforts to protect communities from climate change impacts, including sustained droughts.
- **Cost Data:** Cal OES continues to work with state agencies and local governments to gather drought-related costs, which is reported weekly to the Drought Taskforce.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government Actions

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 17 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county or tribal governments:
 - **Counties:** Glenn County, Inyo County, Kern County, Kings County, Madera County, Mendocino County, Santa Barbara County, San Joaquin County, Sutter County, Tulare County, Tuolumne County
 - **Cities:** Brookside Township-Mendocino County, City of Willits-Mendocino County, City of St. Helena-Napa County, City of Calistoga-Napa County
 - **Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe in Humboldt County, Yurok Tribe in Del Norte County
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** [Local water agencies across the state](#) are implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water use and conservation, and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** Several counties have established drought taskforces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Placer, Plumas, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Sutter,

and Tulare.

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Governor's [Proclamation of Drought Emergency](#)
State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)
California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)
California Department of Water Resources [Current Water Conditions](#)
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Department of Public Health, Drinking Water [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)